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IN PREPARATION

THE CHRONICLE AND DIRECTORY
FOR CHINA, JAPAN, STRAITS, &c., &c.,
FOR 1897.

THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL ISSUE,
and will be found, as usual, to show an advance
on preceding years both in fulness and accuracy
of information.

THE DIRECTORY covers the whole of the
ports and cities of the Far East, from Nether-
lands India to Siberia, in which Europeans
reside.

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THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY.

Hongkong, 5th January, 1897. [22]

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IN MEMORIAM.

Frank, Son of Mr. R. and E. M. Muriel, died 6th January, 1896; aged 3 years.

"They shall be Mine, with the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up My hosts."

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, JANUARY 7th, 1897.

At the recent meeting of the Panjim Company the Chairman referred to the mining regulations of Pahang as imposing a number of onerous and arbitrary conditions which are not calculated to encourage European mining enterprise, and he expressed a fear that in consequence of these regulations the Company was likely to suffer a large curtailment of the original Panjim concession. This fear we hope may prove unfounded, or at least exaggerated. It is important to the State of Pahang that its mineral wealth should be judiciously developed, and there can be no wish on the part of the Government to discourage bona fide European enterprise in that direction. When the State came under British protection measures were naturally taken to prevent the mineral lands passing into the hands of companies that had no fixed intention of working them but simply wished to obtain concessions as a speculation, thinking there might be a possible chance of selling them at a profit. A good deal of land was already in the hands of companies of this description, under prospecting concessions, and as the terms of these concessions expired the Government has declined to renew them, and rightly so, when a company had been spent on development. But the Government, we take it, will assume a different attitude to these Companies, like Panjim and Raub, that have honestly and intelligently opened up mines on their concessions and sunk a substantial amount of capital in the work. Companies of this kind ought to be dealt with in a very liberal spirit by the Government, when their prospects of profit are being considered. It is, of course, to be expected that they should be allowed to remain indefinitely large tracts of country without working it, and it is only a very small portion of its concession that the Panjim Company has as yet been able to deal with—but it would be only fair that, having made good use of part of their concessions, they should be allowed an extension of time with respect to the remainder should they so desire. A liberal reading of the mining regulations should be adopted in cases of that kind.

A statement recently appeared in the C. D. G. News to the effect that Sir George Eustace-Hall, Director-General of the Great Southern Railway, has secured Imperial authorisation for his New Imperial Bank to coin one-tael pieces. The news is true to be regretted. The dollar is the recognised coin of the Far East and it would be an advantage to China if she adopted it as her standard. Although the tael has represented simply a certain weight of silver and there have been no coins of that denomination or value. Both the Canton and Wuchung mints have adopted a dollar coinage, issuing dollars and subsidiary coins representing fractional parts of dollars, and it was naturally assumed that gradually a uniform currency would make its way throughout the empire. The introduction of "dollar dollars," as they are called, would destroy that uniformity and introduce financial confusion which it might tax future statesmen severely to set right. If the tael is preferred to the dollar then the coinage of the latter and of its fractional tokens at the existing mints should be discontinued and the tael adopted as the standard, so that the mints might work on a common basis; but seeing the greater convenience of the dollar it is to be hoped that Sheng may be advised to abandon his proposed dual coinage and adopt the more familiar coin.

The P. & O. steamer *Peshawar* left Singapore for this port at 5 p.m. on the 5th inst.

The C. P. steamer *Empress of India* left Vancouver on the 5th instant for Hongkong.

Admiral Buller, who is at present at Saigon with his despatch vessel *Albarts*, is expected to return to Hongkong about the 15th inst.

The U.S.S. *Macius* left for Canton yesterday and the *Porpoise* gunboat *Dix* for Macao.

The steamer *Glory*, from London and Steven's Left, Singapore, for this port yesterday evening.

It is reported that Sir Halliday Macmillan contemplated only retirement from his position as Secretary of the Chinese Legation at London.

From the *Commerce* we learn that the English Club at Manila has taken a lease of Senator Inchausti's house at Manila and will be in its new premises in March next. The event is to be honoured by a "bridal feast."

We are informed by the General Managers of the New Balmoral Gold Mining Co., Limited, that a telegram has been received from the mines stating that a first crashing of stone at gross averaged 6 dwt. to the ton, realising £230, and that the stone is likely to improve.

Yesterday the British barque *West York*, which had been chartered for the conveyance of some months ago, was sold by auction by Mr. Lammett. There was a good deal of bidding for the hull, which was sold to Mr. Dunbar for £5,000. The sails, cables, anchors, &c., were sold in lots for about £2,500.

Yesterday morning Hon. Commander Hastings had before him Wong Ying, Messrs. Watson and Co.'s chief, who was charged with embezzlement, the total amount of his defalcation being £816. He was remanded in custody, and a trial date set for the 29th of the 29th of last month he should be tried at the English Assizes at Manila.

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SCIENTIFIC MISCELLANY.

Through the marvels of Rontgen photography may have passed the majority of the problems of the Crookes tube will not soon be their concern to investigators. Various groups of different rays, with behaviour seemingly uniform, to the various modes of a vibrating string were some months ago observed in the cathode discharge by M. Birkeland. These groups, being differently deflected by magnetic force, have now been separated. It has been found that the rays were diminished after a narrow slit, through which the cathode discharge passed to the wall of the bulb; where the rays formed a very distinct yellow line of phosphorescence when the anode was connected to earth. A magnetic field through the tube was generated by two small electromagnets placed on opposite sides of the bulb. A complete spectrum of the different elements of the induction coil was obtained, the consecutive bands of this spectrum appearing suddenly one after another to the number of ten or more. Each band evidently consisted of one or more oscillating lines.

The fact that the points and indentations of leaves are made by rain, being elongated and irregular, is now established. In the State of Shantung, from observations made at Tsin-tau, Java, it has also been shown that the leaves tend to assume a vertical position, to change the nerves down so as to scatter the drops. To this Jungar has just added the observation that plants exposed to the spray of waterfalls become "rip-pointed." The leaves lose their down, and become arranged on the stems so as to beat the water.

The problem of the domesticated horse is being solved by Paris. That city now has 200 hippo phrenic butchers, and last year more than 30,000 hours were eaten, the number in 1894 having been 21,237, and in 1872 only 5,034.

A number of unfortunate experiences such as the recent destruction of M. Raoni's picked collection of 1,000 specimens by fire, by explosion of a gunpowder, and by accident, have led to the conclusion that it is necessary to be very careful in dealing with acetone. Some researches by Berthelot and Vialla show that there is a certain risk of accident—especially with compressed acetone—when the gas is stored mixed with air. On decomposing the substance into its constituents, hydrogen and carbon, considerable heat is liberated, and it was proved to be possible to detonate the gas by the action of a spark. The explosion of acetone, by atmospheric pressure to a small portion of the gas, the decomposition occurring only immediately around the source of detonation. With increase of pressure the effect was very much augmented. The use of a detonator was no longer necessary, the simple heating by an incandescent platinum wire being sufficient to cause the gas to decompose. It is necessary, however, to be very careful in the handling of acetone, and the action before so intense that gas that had been compressed to liquefaction developed a pressure of over 35 tons per square inch. Dropping a bottle of the liquefied gas or allowing a heavy weight to fall on it proved insufficient to detonate the confined acetone. When, however, the bottle was broken by the weight, a violent explosion followed, this being due to combustion of the gas in the air and not the effect of its simple decomposition into its elements.

There is still something for German science to do. A report for 1895 shows that there were accidents to nearly 14,000 persons employed in the various industries of Germany, with about 630 fatalities. Duseldorf alone had 13,324 accidents, with 36 deaths. Cases of head injuries were 1,000, and nose and ear injuries 1,000. Cases of burns and scalds were 1,000, and fractures, for London option Manchester, 100; hales waste silk, for Manila—144 tales raw silk, 35 cases silk piece goods, and 4 cases personal effects.

SHIPPING REPORTS.

The German steamer *Bachschmid*, from Yokohama 25th Dec., Kobe 26th, and Nagasaki 27th, arrived at Hongkong 1st Jan. From Kobe to Nagasaki strong S.W. gales, returning to N.W. outside Shimonoseki, hence to port fine weather.

The German steamer *Piccioli*, from Shimonoseki 22nd Dec., and Singapore 23rd, had fresh N.E. wind, high sea, rainy and squally weather, to 15 N. from them to port moderate wind and fine weather. At Carimati Islands on the 25th Dec., spoke a British ship, from Hongkong, 10 days out.

EXPORT CARGOES.

The steamer *Belgrave*, Hongkong to Manila 26th Dec., took 125 tales waste silk; for London option Manchester—75 hales waste silk; for London—100 boxes cases lignum, 100 cases lignum, 100 cases fans, 150 packages tea, 250 packages tea, 250 rolls mats, 100 hales duck feathers, 275 hales canes, 1 case gongs, 12 cases black woodware, 3 cases furniture, and 5 cases personal effects.

The steamer *Chieko*, Hongkong to New York 31st December, took 100 boxes lignum, 100 boxes cases lignum, 100 cases lignum, 100 boxes fans, 150 packages tea, 250 packages tea, 250 rolls mats, 100 hales duck feathers, 275 hales canes, 1 case gongs, 12 cases black woodware, 3 cases furniture, and 5 cases personal effects.

The steamer *Castor*, Hongkong to New York 31st December, took 10 cases signs, 22 cases Chinaware, 200 boxes strawware, 200 boxes Salang, 100 boxes tea, 100 boxes fans, 100 boxes mats, 100 boxes duck feathers, 100 boxes canes, 100 boxes fans sticks, 1,933 sheets tea, 4,733 rolls matting, and 31,488 packages personal effects.

The steamer *Castor*, Hongkong to London 31st December, took 10 cases signs, 22 cases Chinaware, 200 boxes strawware, 200 boxes Salang, 100 boxes tea, 100 boxes fans, 100 boxes mats, 100 boxes duck feathers, 100 boxes canes, 100 boxes fans sticks, 1,933 sheets tea, 4,733 rolls matting, and 31,488 packages personal effects.

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